

IRMCA News

Volume 32, Number 2

A publication of the [Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association](#).

Upcoming Events

9-3-13, Board Meeting
9-4-13, [Golf Outing](#)
1-6-14, Board Meeting
1-6&7-14, Short Course

New Member

[Stark Excavating](#)
Dave Stark, VP
[Jeff Jackson](#),
Concrete Prod. Operation Mgr.
1805 W. Washington
Bloomington, IL 61701
Phone: 309.828.5034
Fax: 309.828.7154

New Board Members

Jim Amundsen
Herb Moeckel
Jim Posadny
Dennis Probst
L.C. Sitterly

Event Reception Sponsors

Buzzi Unicem, USA; Cemex; Continental Cement; ESSROC; Hanson Material Service; Holcim (US); Illinois Cement; Lafarge North America; Lehigh Cement; McNeilus; St. Marys Cement; Vulcan; WR Grace & Co.

IRMCA Executive Director Retires

Bruce Grohne has announced that he will retire in December of this year. The board of directors has begun the search process to fill the position. [Here](#) are the details.

New IDOT Contact

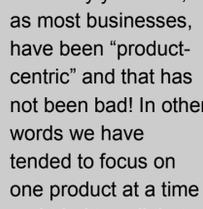
Daniel H. Tobias, Ph.D., P.E., S.E., is the acting Concrete and Soils Engineer for the Illinois department of Transportation.

IRMCA member adds compressed natural gas trucks to fleet

In 2011, Ozinga introduced the first Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) powered concrete mixing truck in the state of Illinois. Since then, the 85-year-old company has added over 100 CNG-fueled vehicles to their current fleet, expecting to have approximately 110 trucks in service dedicated to run solely on natural gas by the end of summer 2013.

The CNG-powered engines provide numerous advantages when compared to their diesel-fueled counterparts. In addition to running more quietly and dramatically reducing emissions, the new natural gas trucks also run with the same power and torque that drivers are accustomed to.

With a combination of retrofit and factory-dedicated CNG vehicles, Ozinga is well on its way to achieving their goal of having their entire fleet of 500 trucks and support vehicles running on natural gas by the year 2020. In an effort to encourage other fleets to join the alternative energy movement, Ozinga has also built two CNG fueling stations in the Chicago area, with plans for future stations already in the works.



Customer Centricity vs. Product Centricity

By Bruce Grohne

I recently attended a talk about “customer centricity” and I like it well enough to want to share some of what I heard.

For many years we, as most businesses, have been “product-centric” and that has not been bad! In other words we have tended to focus on one product at a time and tried to sell that product to as many customers as possible. An example might be the excitement the last few years about pervious concrete. Many of us learned about it, developed it, trained sales people and went about selling pervious concrete to as many decision makers as we could find. Not bad. Product-centric competition is based on having a product that meets a certain customer need, and then trying to find as many customers as possible who want to have that need met. Customer-centric businesses, on the other hand, focus on one customer at a time and try to sell that customer as many products as possible. Assuming that you start with quality products and services, being customer-centric means understanding the customer’s point of view and respecting the customer’s interest. You fix problems, handle complaints, and remember individual customer preferences. You offer more products and services as you learn more about the customer.

I am not suggesting that these 2 centricities conflict, I am simply suggesting that we must give ever-increasing attention to the customer. To be successful, a business needs to be able to satisfy a customer’s needs and it must have customers who want that need satisfied. Realizing profit from the product is important, but realizing profit from satisfying all of a customer’s needs might be even more important...products do not have a memory, customers do! Customers who have had all their needs satisfied are repeat customers and will tell others.

There is only one boss; the customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else.

- Sam Walton

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Doing the job right and the value of repeat business

By [Randell C. Riley, P.E.](#)

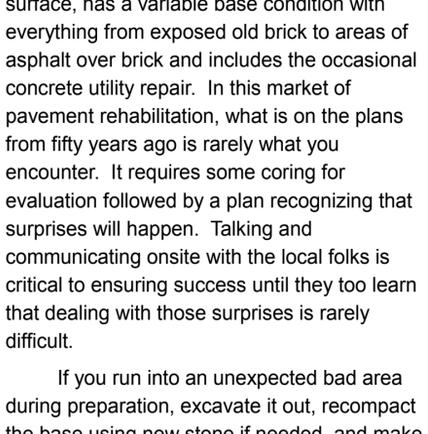
Over the years one observation that I have made repeatedly is that you cannot overlook the value of providing a quality product and its tendency to produce repeat business. Do jobs right the first time and folks will look to you again for future projects. Being able to answer their questions and help solve problems along the way is a key factor in making this all possible. For a case study in this approach let’s take a look at what is occurring in Macomb, Illinois.

It all started from a project on Adams Street that had problems with busses stopping on the hill and shoving the asphalt. That single small project in 2003 was the beginning of a market, and all of the concrete is being supplied by local ready mix concrete producers. Can you do the same? Of course you can! All IRMCA members benefit from a similar effort.

Working through various issues with local engineers, Public Works folks, and contractors is actually quite easy. You deal with the problems on the fly, and concrete, particularly the fiber reinforced variety, is able to settle into place and provide the level of service needed for the pavement. And it will last longer than anything offered by the other guys!

Currently there are two Macomb projects in various stages of construction that have their roots in projects and relationships built a number of years ago.

The first on Carroll Street, under construction by IRMCA member Laverdiere Construction, Inc., is a 4-inch plus structural fiber reinforced concrete section with joints on a four-foot by four-foot joint spacing in a residential area. It is built as a partial overlay/inlay to deal with grades and maintain drainage in the area, in part by placement of new curb and gutter.

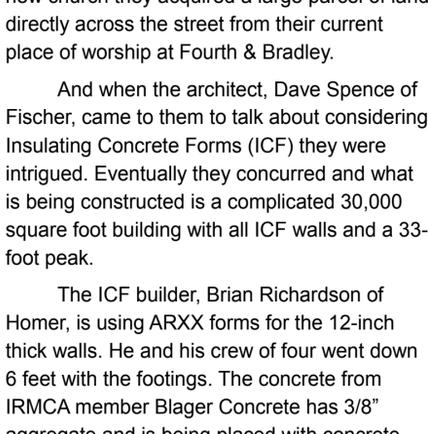


A completed section of Carroll Street in Macomb, IL.

The pavement, like that of most older communities after milling to prepare the surface, has a variable base condition with everything from exposed old brick to areas of asphalt over brick and includes the occasional concrete utility repair. In this market of pavement rehabilitation, what is on the plans from fifty years ago is rarely what you encounter. It requires some coring for evaluation followed by a plan recognizing that surprises will happen. Talking and communicating onsite with the local folks is critical to ensuring success until they too learn that dealing with those surprises is rarely difficult.

If you run into an unexpected bad area during preparation, excavate it out, recompact the base using new stone if needed, and make the concrete as thick as the total base plus overlay. If you take care to make sure that the joints in the overlay approximate that of the underlying area as close as practical, it just works. It’s not that hard, but until folks learn this is doable with concrete, it takes a while.

Too many times everything grinds to a halt while the uninitiated want to go drag out the Illinois Department of Transportation design manual, put in a new base and a new concrete slab “in accordance with” IDOT standards (See “The IDOT Influence...,” IRMCA News, Spring 2012) and drive up the cost and complicate the project unnecessarily. This is rehab, not new construction!



A section of North Bower Road.

Need more proof that concrete overlays work? Just check the latest copy of the Illinois Chapter, Inc. – American Concrete Pavement Association/Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association [project database](#) of concrete overlays. You too can benefit by doing the job right to build a repeat business!

Randell Riley is the Executive Director/Engineer for Illinois Chapter – ACPA, and a consultant to Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association. He can be reached at 217-793-4933.

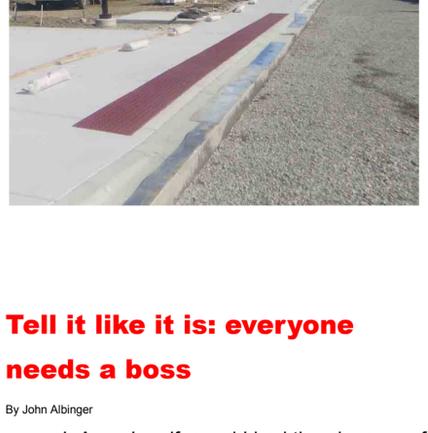
Champaign Church of the Living God

When members of the Church of the Living God in Champaign decided to build a new church they acquired a large parcel of land directly across the street from their current place of worship at Fourth & Bradley.

And when the architect, Dave Spence of Fischer, came to them to talk about considering Insulating Concrete Forms (ICF) they were intrigued. Eventually they concurred and what is being constructed is a complicated 30,000 square foot building with all ICF walls and a 33-foot peak.

The ICF builder, Brian Richardson of Homer, is using ARXX forms for the 12-inch thick walls. He and his crew of four went down 6 feet with the footings. The concrete from IRMCA member Blager Concrete has 3/8” aggregate and is being placed with concrete placement conveyors.

Richardson, along with his father Ivan, has built over 160 homes and many commercial buildings and says this is probably the most complicated and challenging. Hurry if you want to see the forms in place; they won’t be visible for long.



Franklin Park police and corrections building

The Village of Franklin Park was awarded a sustainability grant that supplemented funding for their new Police and Corrections Building. Working within the constrictions of the grant and working with MTI Construction Services, Elgin, it was determined that a great portion of the new parking area must be constructed as pervious pavement. It was also mandated that the pavement be placed by NRMCA certified technicians.

Cerami Construction of Melrose Park was brought on as the concrete contractor. They began site work and contacted the Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association to aid in getting several members of their company certified. Lot construction was begun in May and finished in quick order. IRMCA member Elmhurst Chicago Stone provided the mix and IRMCA member S.T.A.T.E. Testing conducted the required testing. The 8” pervious layer was placed on a 10” stone base.

Cerami was well prepared: geotechnical fabric was placed between the soil and the stone base; plastic rolled and in position; sand bags were ready and in position to hold down the plastic; concrete was placed with a conveyor; the crew was of good size; the stone base was well wetted prior to placement; and the edges received extra compaction.

The pavement was placed, cured with “The Bean” and covered in a very timely manner. Congratulations to all involved, especially for the Village of Franklin Park for including a sustainable parking lot for their new building.



Tell it like it is: everyone needs a boss

By [John Albinger](#)

JoAnn, Jennifer and I had the pleasure of going to see Bruce yesterday (June 25th). It was a pleasure for two reasons, first and most importantly, to see that Bruce is on the road to recovery. He looks good and feels pretty good. The other reason it was such a pleasure was to see that Bruce wasn’t miss a beat when it came to being the Executive Director of the Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association.

For a few minutes we sat in his family room talking about his experiences, his prognosis, and his plans for returning to the trenches. Then we got down to business, as usual. As we went into the dining room I had to smile. On the table at each of our places was the agenda and all of the pertinent handouts (attached with the customary paper clip), and naturally, there was a time table that would, of course, be followed. We had been sent the agenda prior to the meeting so that we could prepare our reports (some were prepared better than others – but that’s not unusual). Bruce assigned further action and appropriate response dates as we went through the agenda.

Bruce always listened and always made the final decision. Needless to say the meeting ended when it was supposed to. If you ever attended any function that Bruce was in charge of (sometimes he may not have to be in charge – but) you know that’s how it is. As an “employee” I, for one, love it.

Isn’t it nice to have a boss who listens, respects your opinion, makes decisions (which you may or may not agree with), expects you to do what you’re supposed to do, and doesn’t forget. One of the many pleasures this “job” has afforded me is talking to Bruce. I’ve mentioned before how interesting it is to talk to someone my own age. (By the way I was 70 on June 13th – and not even a card!). On the other hand, Bruce and I both know this commiserating may not be all good. We realize we think like 70-year-olds and know it’s going to be a good thing for IRMCA to get some new and maybe younger blood. As for me, I told Bruce, “I’ll wait and see.” The Association will be fine. It will continue to serve its members, contribute to the industry and prosper, but whoever the new director is, it won’t be Bruce.

Oh yes – thank God Bruce has Valerie.

